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CHICO MAN CHARGED WITH SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF A MINOR

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned a two-count indictment charging 30-year old MICHAEL ISHAQ of Chico, California with the sexual exploitation of a minor. The indictment charges that between May 31, 2004 and June 27, 2004, ISHAQ transported and aided and abetted the transportation of a minor from Illinois to California for the purpose of engaging in unlawful sexual conduct. The indictment also charges ISHAQ in a second count with using the mail, telephone, and Internet to persuade, induce and entice a person whom he believed was under 18 years of age, to engage in unlawful sexual conduct.

The indictment of ISHAQ is the product of a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Chico Police Department, and the Shorewood, Illinois Police Department.

According to court documents, the investigation began when police from Shorewood, Illinois contacted the FBI in Sacramento to report a missing 15-year old. The parents of the 15-year old had discovered that their daughter had been communicating via the Internet with ISHAQ who lived in Chico, and that e-mails on the girl's computer revealed that ISHAQ had facilitated her travel to Sacramento by purchasing her airline ticket.

If convicted, the maximum penalty under federal law for each offense is a 5-year mandatory minimum, to 30-year maximum term of imprisonment, a \$250, 000 fine, a possible life term of supervised release, and a statutory assessment.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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